

Sleepy Hollow State Park
January 12, 2002

Who Would've thought Ice Fishing Could be So Much Fun!



Terry Ellenwood, Park Manager, started the day in a classroom setting. Teaching about riggings, bait, keeping warm, "tip ups" and ice safety.

We learned how to tie our own lines and hooks...and even how to tie a fly!



Teacher showed us how to correctly identify the fish we were going out to catch.

And the international sign for "how big the fish was".





Finally, we headed out to the frozen lake with our bait and tackle and buckets to sit on.

This is no fashion show, You need to dress warm and be comfortable! Make sure your feet are warm! And gloves are better than mittens for fishing. It's hard to have fun when you're cold.



It is always important to check the ice. Since you can't tell the strength of ice by looking at it, the best place to check is at the shoreline. If the ice is squishy or broken up, chances are the balance of the ice is shaky. You can always call the coast guard to find out about ice conditions, but each individual water body should be checked before you venture out. Always take someone with you or let someone know where you are going and when you'll be back.

Although there were many fishing holes already augered into the ice, we took our turn at it. You can also use a spud to chop a hole into the ice, but an auger makes the job so much easier, especially when the ice is really thick!



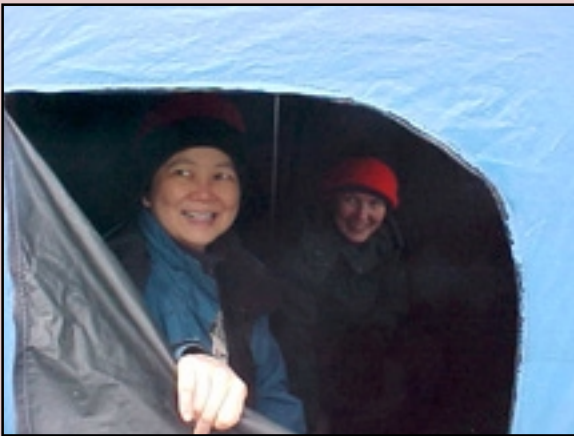


Let the fishing begin!

Sitting on a bucket out on the ice, with the anticipation of catching a fish is invigorating!

That little whole in the ice is like a doorway to another universe. For how

bright the ice is, even on a cloudy day, the water seems black as night. And when you feel that first tug on your line, you can't help wonder if it's really a fish.



Ice shanties are a nice addition to the ice fishing experience. They can be as simple as a pop up tent, or a semipermanent wooden structure.

Shanties must be removed from the ice in March, or before if ice conditions become unsafe. On a windy day, there is nothing better than sitting inside a shanty while you're waiting for a fish to bite!



After a couple hours of fishing, we pack up our gear and get ready for the journey back to shore.





Back at the classroom, we get warmed up and have some lunch before we begin our lessons in "cleaning the catch".

Although nobody caught any fish, everybody gets to clean some fish.



Sunfish are an ice fishing favorite along with perch and bass. Depending on where you are fishing, walleye is also great catch in winter.

Cleaning and filleting takes some practice, but well worth learning.

It was a really fun day and a great learning experience for all of us. If you want to try fishing, ice fishing or not, remember to purchase a fishing license and know the regulations for the area you are fishing.

Stay tuned to this Web site for more outdoor experiences for Woman.

For more information about the Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW) Contact:
Lynn Marla,
Department of Natural Resources
BOW Coordinator
517-241-2225

Or e-mail marlal@michigan.gov